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TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

February 14, 2013

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, District of Columbia 20420

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

Recent *Baltimore Sun* and *Washington Post* articles have brought to light the continued challenges facing the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Baltimore Regional Office in serving Maryland's Veterans. The delays being reported – which you in large part inherited and which you and I had the opportunity to discuss during your transition to Secretary -- are not acceptable. Governor O'Malley and I remain concerned that the average number of days it takes to process a claim at the Baltimore Office has gone up, not down.

As you and your staff continue to address this issue, Maryland's Department of Veteran Affairs stands ready to assist the VBA in any way possible. In particular, our Benefits Specialists at the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs will continue to maintain regular communications with the VBA Regional Office and assist our Veterans in submitting accurate claims.

We share the same goal of providing the best and most efficient claims process for Maryland's 443,000 Veterans. Our Veterans have served this country with distinction and honor, and they deserve to have their claims processed in a more timely fashion. Thank you for making it a VBA priority to address these challenges. I look forward to working with you in serving Maryland's Veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "AGB", written over a light blue circular stamp.

Anthony G. Brown

AGB/bmw